

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A product comprising a substrate to which is chemically bonded a monolayer of silicon atoms which are connected to other silicon atoms in said monolayer through oxygen atoms in said monolayer, wherein the surface of said substrate comprises an inorganic element or oxide thereof, which is capable of forming a bond to silicon atoms in said monolayer, and wherein the monolayer is substituted with first and second hydrocarbyl substituents and each of the silicon atoms in said monolayer is substituted with said first hydrocarbyl substituent or said second hydrocarbyl substituent, wherein said first hydrocarbyl substituent is longer than said second hydrocarbyl substituent, and wherein the density of said hydrocarbyl substituents is at least 7 micromoles per square meter of substrate surface,

wherein said product is formed by hydrating the surface of said substrate to form on said surface a monolayer of water, and then reacting said hydrated surface with silanes of the formulas  $R^1SiX_3$  and  $R^2SiX_3$ , wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are hydrocarbyl substituents and X is a leaving group, provided that  $R^1$  is longer than  $R^2$ , under conditions under which said silanes react at said surface and form said monolayer of silicon atoms,

wherein said inorganic element is selected from the group consisting of Al, Zr, P, Be, Mg, Ti, V, Cr, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Ga, Ge, As, Rb, Sr, Y, Nb, Mo, Ru, Rh, Pt, Au, Ag, Tl, Pb, and Bi.

Claim 8, line 1, delete "Claim 6" and replace therefor --Claim 1--.

Claim 9, line 1, delete "Claim 6" and replace therefor --Claim 1--.

Claim 10, line 1, delete "Claim 6" and replace therefor --Claim 1--.

Claim 11, line 1, delete "Claim 6" and replace therefor --Claim 1--.

Claim 27, line 4, delete "Claim 6" and replace therefor --Claim 1--.

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~~48~~<sup>13</sup> (Amended) The method of rendering a surface comprising an inorganic element or oxide thereof resistant to chemical and mechanical degradation which comprises forming on said surface a protective monolayer of silicon atoms which are connected to other silicon atoms in said monolayer through oxygen atoms in said monolayer, wherein the monolayer is substituted with first and second hydrocarbyl substituents and each of the silicon atoms in said monolayer is substituted with a first hydrocarbyl substituent or a second hydrocarbyl substituent, wherein said first hydrocarbyl substituent is longer than said second hydrocarbyl substituent, and wherein the density of said hydrocarbyl substituents is at least 7 micromoles per square meter of substrate surface;

wherein said protective monolayer is formed by hydrating the surface of said substrate to form on said surface a monolayer of water, and then reacting said hydrated surface with silanes of the formulas  $R^1SiX_3$  and  $R^2SiX_3$ , wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are hydrocarbyl substituents and X is a leaving group, provided the  $R^1$  is longer than  $R^2$ , under conditions whereunder said silanes react at said surface and form said monolayer of silicon atoms,

wherein said inorganic element is selected from the group consisting of Al, Zr, P, Be, Mg, Ti, V, Cr, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Ga, Ge, As, Rb, Sr, Y, Nb, Mo, Ru, Rh, Pt, Au, Ag, Tl, Pb, and Bi.